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Hope in Stanhope
Santa visited Stanhope for their annual tree lighting last week, bringing a little extra Christmas cheer to the season. /TIM YANO staff photographer

MH fees for water remain at odds

THOMAS SMITH
Journalist

Water, water, everywhere, all for Minden to drink.

Water was on the docket at last week's Council meeting.

During this year's budgeting process, Minden Hills hired the Ontario Clean Water Agency (OCWA) to complete the 2025 Water and Wastewater Rate study.

The study was to find out how much to charge for the use of water. The rate will fund the operating and capital expenditures into the near future.

"We try to find a rate to make it fair and equitable for the people of Minden Hills," said Jason Younker, representative for OCWA.

In Minden Hills township, there are 628 customers that receive water services and 593 customers that utilize wastewater services.

Currently, the revenue gained from water and wastewater combined is $1,354,900. During the OCWA's customer forecast, they noted that Minden Hills population has increased by 12.5 per cent from 2016 to 2021.

Something needs to change to be able to pay for a growing population's water supply.

Younker noted that the numbers seem like a 'boom town' type growth. With a shortage of housing locally, OCWA says they cannot be certain what the population will be like in the next 25 years.

If Minden does experience a boom, a new wastewater management system will be needed. The rate increase that was presented did not include this wastewater system. A new wastewater management system would skyrocket the budget by millions of dollars.

"It is recommended to do an eye and eye reduction strategy, but if growth is the goal of Minden, a potential for capacity increase will be needed," said Younker.

Currently, an average household of 2.2 people in Minden Hills pays around $2,200 per year for their water.

OCWA's first recommendation is to increase flat fees to the level that metered fees are. That would be increasing the flat fee to $797.

The second recommendation is to switch revenue sources from water to wastewater. Decrease water rates by 14 per cent and increase wastewater rates by 14 per cent.

The third recommendation was to increase rates for both systems. It is always recommended to have a yearly two per cent increase to counter inflation, but Younker said increasing the rate to three per cent would increase funds in Minden Hills' reserve.

Councillor Ivan Ingram brought up that some apartment buildings in the municipality only have one meter. He proposed having metres for each household within multifamily residential buildings. Having worked on some multifamily properties, he says that he thinks Minden Hills loses around $20,000 per year by not having separate meters.

Director of Public Works Mike Timmins said that he would have to look into that issue.

Councillor Tammy McKelvey said that this is a topic that she has brought up before. She also mentioned that trailer

see COUNCIL page 12

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Library funding up for debate during first draft budget talks

EMILY STONEHOUSE
Editor

As Haliburton County CAO Gary Dyke noted, the approval of next year's budget is the biggest decision of the year. For this round of budget deliberations, the county opted to work alongside council liaisons, who had access to the budget in advance and were able to provide their recommendations prior to the regular meeting of council on Nov. 26. The committee for this was comprised of Councillor Bob Carter, the mayor of Minden Hills, Councillor Murray Fearrey, the mayor of Dysart et al, and Warden Dave Burton, the mayor of Highlands East.

The 2026 draft budget as recommended by staff presents a tax rate increase of 7.72 per cent, which equates to a household impact of an increase of $20.75 per $100,000 of assessment.

Following review of the draft budget in early November, the liaison committee recommended a levy decrease of $794,318 from the staff's presented budget, which represents a 4.63 per cent tax rate increase and a cost increase of $12.45 per $100,000 of assessment.

Due to the fact that the liaison committee merely represents a select few voices on county council, staff brought the original recommendation to council on Nov. 26 for discussion.

Library lays it on the line

Opening the dialogue around the 2026 county draft budget, Andrea Brown, the CAO and chief librarian for Haliburton County Public Library (HCPL) took the floor. "You are all very well aware that there are a lot of people struggling in our county right now. We have people struggling with financial pressures, with physical and mental health, with anxiety in our teens for example, and with loneliness and isolation," she said. "Public library spaces welcome all members of our community."

Brown went on to note some library numbers from the past year. In 2024, there were 7,402 cardholders borrowing library materials from HCPL. They also offered 597 programs with an attendance of 12,349 people. HCPL's website was well-used, with 119,425 views. She also noted that 80,487 physical items were circulated to community members, including 155 book club set checkouts.

But it's not just about the books. "We do provide that access, but we provide so much more in modern libraries," said Brown. "We serve our communities in many types of ways beyond loaning out books." She went on to cite free WiFi, access to printers, renting movies, public washrooms, free programming, and a safe space for all ages.

Brown referenced the recent ice storm that slammed the county this past spring. While cell phones and internet were down for weeks, the libraries across the county provided access to connections for those in need.

"A lot of people need to come in, not because the power is down in an outage, but because there just isn't power at home, or internet access at home," said Brown. "If you're struggling to put food on the table for your family, or to keep your house warm, high speed internet is not necessarily your highest priority in terms of your family's budget."

And while the technical components of the library have value, the qualitative competent to the spaces make them rich. "It's an important community service we offer in terms of connecting people with each other," the library CAO said. "People across the socioeconomic spectrum."

Brown referred to a CBC article about Toronto Public libraries, where a geriatrician noted how extreme loneliness is equivalent to 15 cigarettes a day on someone's health and well-being. He recommends "prescribing the library" to feel more connected and alleviate loneliness.

> *"The county tax rate as presented continues to be the second lowest tax rate when compared to the 2024 rates of all of the counties in eastern Ontario wardens caucus."*
>
> — Andrea Robinson, County of Haliburton

While the HCPL has a highly dedicated group of volunteers who fundraise for programming throughout the year with Friends of the Library, the bulk of the budget is allocated to staff wages.

Brown went to county council with an ask for $1,377,081 for the 2026 budget, which is a 9.77 per cent increase over last year. "Our proposed 2026 budget total is less than the total budgeted expenses in 2024, even though we have an additional branch to operate," said Brown, noting the addition of the Dorset branch in the fall.

For 2026, the library board is requesting four additional hours per week of open hours at the Dorset Branch."We received feedback from the Dorset community requesting that there be an after-school, after work opening time," said Brown. Other than four weekly Dorset hours, no additional positions or hours have been requested for 2026.

Brown noted that she learned on Monday morning, when the council agenda was published publicly online, that the council liaisons committee recommended the library levy be no more than $1,000,000. "A million dollar cap would mean finding a 25 per cent reduction in the budget," she said.

The floor was opened to questions, but no councillors piped up. The conversation was then ushered into the main conversation about the 2026 county draft budget.

Budget talks

County CAO Gary Dyke noted that he and staff are building a budget based on a series of principles that are based on fiscal responsibility, sustainability, adaptability, and accountability. "As a two-tiered system we have a number of areas we have to consider," he said, noting the budgetary pressures that exist at the lower level municipalities.

Dyke noted that this year's budget is "truly a progressive budget."

"It recognizes the long-term needs of how we budget our money and how we prioritize where that money goes," he said.

As a big-picture thinker, Dyke has prioritized long-term forecasting on expenditures up to the year 2030. "I think this is an important thing to do because, as I like to say a lot, we're not planning for Wednesday, we're planning for a thousand Wednesdays," he said.

"This may be one of the most challenging budget years I've faced in over 30 years," said Dyke. "The biggest challenge right now … is external cost." The CAO noted social services, housing, public health, to name a few. "All vital services to our community, but they're out of the direct control of us," he said. "We receive the services from third parties, and we're legislatively required to pay those services."

The cost of external services represents over 50 per cent of the projected increase for the 2026 draft budget.

Dyke also noted that there are issues cropping up that are ushered in with a new age, such as cyber security. He shared that those are absolute requirements to protect the community moving forward.

Andrea Robinson, the director of corporate services, presented the budget on behalf of senior staff at the county. Robinson shared the breakdown of the draft budget development, as well as the role of the council liaisons on this round of budget talks.

The total levy presented for 2026 is $27,705,004, which is an increase to the rate payer of $20.75 per $100,000 assessment per year. "The county tax rate as presented continues to be the second lowest tax rate when compared to the 2024 rates of all of the counties in eastern Ontario wardens caucus," noted Robinson.

The inflation levy increase is broken into two parts. First, an operating budget, which is largely dominated by public works, and also includes IT software increasing, audit and legal, vehicle maintenance and fuel, insurance, advertising, and heating costs. Secondly, Robinson broke down the capital budget, which includes the public works infrastructure program, the roads department fleet, and IT hardware and software.

New this year, and new across the province, county staff have developed a community health and well being levy. This half-percent dedicated to community health and outreach programs as required, "will help fund and stabilize this growing demand for our community," noted Robinson. It would come at a cost of $1.34 per $100,000 of assessment for the rate payer.

While the specifics for what falls under the umbrella of community health and well-being, Dyke noted that it would include support towards medical centres, physician and nurse recruitment, mental health services, and even daycares down the line, if needed.

Council reacts

"I've got a number of questions," opened Councillor Liz Danielsen, mayor of Algonquin Highlands, "but I'll dive right into the library." She inquired as to whether the library could use their surplus from reserves to offset the cut that council liaisons recommended. "I'm not sure they can legally do that," she said, "but I guess I am looking for a bit of response around that."

Dyke clarified that it would be allowed.

Councillor Jennifer Dailloux of Algonquin Highlands called the library her "hill to die on."

She adamantly disagreed with the council liaison's recommendation of slashing the proposed library budget. "We don't know what next year is going to look like," she said. "We'd be running the risk … that the library budget would be decimated. It would be a catastrophic trauma to the library services system."

Councillor Carter responded to the backlash. He noted the third party costs presented as a bill. "We must pay it, there's no discussion," he said. He referenced the amount that Haliburton County citizens could absorb in terms of a tax increase. "When we looked at what we could do to mitigate this, we looked across all departments," he said. He shared that his liaison recommendations impact all departments, including IT, planning, and roads. "We looked at trying to find monies everywhere."

Carter noted that for the past number of years, the library has ended their fiscal year with a surplus. Based on the fact that the county provides the eight buildings which house libraries across the region, there are no capital expenses to the budget, which means that the surplus does not reside formally in a reserve manner. "Now the citizens of Haliburton County have built up $400,000 or so worth of surplus which are sitting in the library bank account, if you will."

Carter suggested taking the money from the savings over the years, and applying it to this year's budget ask. "That's the thinking here," he said. "This is not a situation where we're trying to cut the library budget … spend that money that we've already given you."

"It's a double whammy, the library," said Councillor Murray Fearrey, "It's not just what we levy here, it's also what we levy at the townships."

"This money was raised and tucked away when in my opinion, it shouldn't be," he went on to say. "It's not a reserve, it's a piggy bank … I don't think it's a big penalty, they would never need that amount."

Talk circulated a number of times around whether the decision to cut the budget this year would impact the 2027 library year. "You just have to make the best decision you can with the information you have at the time," said Councillor Lisa Schell from Minden. "And at the time this is the best information we have, and what we have to work with. 2027, we have no idea."

"We have priorities when we're elected here," said Councillor Walt McKechnie of Dysart. "This is the taxpayers' money that we're dealing with … but we don't know what's going to happen next year with bridges … we only wish that every department had a $400,000 reserve set up."

Councillor Dailloux raised concerns around cutting the budget this time around, only to have the need be increased during the 2027 budget deliberations. "There is no guarantee," said Danielsen, noting that even the council will have changed in 2027 due to a spring election forecasted for 2026. "The next budget will be passed by a totally different group. That's the unfortunate part of it."

"Hopefully the next council will be as passionate about library services as this one," said Fearrey, "and they will fund it … I can't believe they won't because it's so important."

When Carter brought up deferring projects to future

see COUNCILLORS page 3

Councillors look ahead to 2027 budgets

from page 2

years in an effort to cut costs this time around. "It is an extraordinary confluence of events this year," he said. "So we need to look at these extraordinary measures within the whole budget process."

"I don't have any reliance whatsoever on our provincial government," countered Danielsen. "I think we're going to be faced with the same kind of challenges this year, and the year after that … it's definitely kicking the can down the road in my mind. The money has to be spent at some point in time. The more you delay it, the more it's going to cost."

To offer clarification, Dyke confirmed that both the staff proposed increase of 7.72 per cent and the liaison recommendation of 4.63 per cent do not include the baseline levies for community health and capital investment.

County council received the report as information, and will be discussed at the Dec. 10 regular meeting of council to be approved. Staff will be welcoming public questions and feedback during the meeting.

Burton steps into warden position once again

EMILY STONEHOUSE

Editor

If you blinked, you may have missed it.

After a lengthy two-hour meeting where county council discussed the 2026 draft budget on Nov. 26, the nomination results for county warden were also confirmed.

In mid-November, nomination forms were distributed for councillors to put a new name forward for warden. The clerk received one qualified nomination form from Councillor Murray Fearrey and Councillor Cecil Ryall, nominating current county warden, Councillor Dave Burton once again.

In the absence of other nomination forms, an election is not required, and the acclimation and swearing in of Councillor Burton will occur on Tuesday, Dec. 9, 2025 at 2 p.m. in the Council Chambers.

Nominations for deputy warden will follow.

New proclamation welcomes inclusion and respect

EMILY STONEHOUSE

Editor

Mark your calendars. December 3 is now officially recognized as International Day of Persons with Disabilities in Haliburton County.

During a regular meeting of county council on Nov. 26, Sue Tiffin, director of community outreach for the county, spoke on behalf of the County of Haliburton's Joint Accessibility Advisory Committee (JAAC), seeking council's endorsement and support to proclaim December 3, 2025 as International Day of Persons with Disabilities in Haliburton County.

Originally started in 1992 by the United Nations General Assembly, the recognized day aims to promote an understanding of disability issues, mobilize support for the dignity, rights and well-being of persons with disabilities, and increase awareness of gains to be derived from the integration of persons with disabilities in every aspect of political, social, economic and cultural life, according to the staff report.

"It's a day for us to promote the full and equal participation of persons with disabilities," said Tiffin, "and to take action for the inclusion of persons with disabilities in all aspects of society and development."

"The County of Haliburton is committed to accessibility and ensuring that people of all ages and abilities enjoy the same opportunities as they live, work, visit, retire and invest in our community," read county CAO Gary Dyke.

Warden Dave Burton officially gave the green light to proclaim December 3, 2025 as International Day of Persons with Disabilities in Haliburton County, without any dispute from sitting members of council.

Do you have newspapers from before 1980? The Haliburton Highlands Digital Archives project is seeking copies of newspapers from Minden and Haliburton to add to their collection of over 7000 digitized papers.

Unfortunately there are some gaps in the archives, and project organizers are seeking community support.

If you have papers from before 1980, please **visit www.hhda.ca** to help complete the collection.

Haliburton paramedic honoured for more than 30 years of service

ADAM FRISK
Journalist

Colonel Shane Elder, left, and Chief Greg Sage from Halton Paramedic Service and current President of the Ontario Association of Paramedic Chiefs, right, are pictured with Haliburton County Paramedic Service Chief Mike Slatter. /submitted

For some people, 30 years on the job may feel like a lifetime, but for Haliburton County Paramedic Service Chief Mike Slatter, it felt like it went by in the blink of an eye.

"There's no way I've been doing it that long, but I have,"Slatter said with a laugh in a recent telephone interview. "I've always loved this profession."

The chief is approaching 33 years on the job and was recently among 49 Ontario paramedics who received the Governor General Emergency Medical Services Exemplary Service Medal bars for providing exemplary emergency medical services for 30, 40 and 50 years.

While he is a new face in the Highlands, having taken over the chief position in February of this year, just in time for a major ice storm, the medal was a nod to a career spent largely serving Hastings, Lennox and Addington, and Frontenac Counties.

It was Hastings County that originally put forward the nomination for the award, a testament to his long-standing dedication before moving to Haliburton.

Looking back at his career, which began in the early 90s, the veteran paramedic explained that while ambulances are slightly bigger today, the true evolution lies in the technology and the scope of care.

"The biggest piece of equipment that has changed is the stretcher," he explained. "The stretcher that I started with, you essentially had to do a deadlift from the ground level up to load a person. Nowadays, we're moving to what's called a power load system, where it's a hydraulic system."

The medical capabilities of paramedics have also shifted dramatically. Slatter described his early days as "advanced first aid," where the philosophy was often to simply get the patient to the hospital.

"Now we're providing many different medications and providing many different treatments to people to help stabilize them prior to arriving at the hospital," he said. "The job is more than driving an ambulance."

For many, longevity in emergency services is rare due to the high-stress nature of the job. The chief credits his endurance to strong support systems and the ability to disconnect. Whether it is golfing, curling, or cycling, he emphasizes the importance of having a life outside the uniform.

"I've always had a friend group not related to paramedics," Slatter said. "You know, I have my friend group within paramedics and then a friend group that's outside of paramedics where I can just be a person and not have to talk about the job with people if I don't want to."

He also drew inspiration from family. His father-in-law was a paramedic for 38 years and one of the first to take the Ministry of Health training program in the 1960s.

"He was always an advisor and a mentor for me," Slatter said.

When asked about the specific calls that have stayed with him over three decades, the chief said it isn't just one single event, but a collection of memories. Those memories often surface at different times, sometimes while driving, other times while sitting in his office.

And the duty of his job has ranged from the beginning of life to the end.

"I've delivered several babies ... and I've been with people during their loved one's last moments," Slatter said.

Then there are the calls that stand out simply because they are bizarre or unexpected.

"You don't hear every day about a plane that crashed in a field," he said. "So you tend to remember those types of calls."

As for looking ahead, when asked if he plans to hit the 40-year mark, the chief remains open to the possibility.

"I've been contemplating that," he admitted. "I do still love it. As long as I'm contributing and still making a difference and not just showing up to work to collect a paycheque, then I will keep doing this."

For now, he is happy to be in Haliburton County, where he describes the staff and community as "fantastic," despite ice storms nonetheless.

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Portrait of Nature: Local artist finds fresh canvas

ADAM FRISK
Journalist

For the past seven years, local artist June Krisko has viewed the Haliburton Highlands through a lens of passion. While many photographers look for sweeping landscapes, she looks closer, seeking the ruffled feathers of a diving duck on the Gull River or the texture of wildflowers in her garden.

As winter approaches, the photographer is planning her next chapter with a move to the Huntsville area. While the move marks the end of her residency in Haliburton, the artistic identity she forged here will travel with her.

Krisko was educated in fine arts at Redeemer College and ceramics at Sheridan College, and spent years moving between Alberta and the Niagara region before settling in Haliburton. It wasn't until landing in the Highlands that the artist transitioned from digital art and Photoshop design to serious nature photography.

Her breakthrough with the medium came in 2019 with a show at the Rails End Gallery titled *Bird*, alongside wood artist Greg Gillespie.

"I showed my pictures of birds, and people were like, 'Oh, ah!' So I thought maybe this is something I should go into," Krisko recalled in a telephone interview last week. "That's when I started chasing the birds and really enjoyed it."

The photographer developed a passion for capturing the unique wildlife of the area, particularly during the winter months. She recounted the thrill of jumping out of her car in Minden to photograph diving ducks on the freezing river.

"You get some really unique types of ducks ... their feathers stick straight up," she said. "It's a turn-on rush. You look for different types and think, 'Oh, I haven't seen that one yet.'"

Krisko explained that for her, the medium is as important as the message. Influenced by the natural subject matter of her work, she adopted an environmentally friendly business model, utilizing recycled cardstock and biodegradable packaging.

Nature photographer June Krisko has spent nearly a decade capturing local wildlife, and is looking forward to starting a new chapter. /submitted

"When I started focusing on nature photography... I wanted to reflect that in the work I create," she explained.

The artist sells photo greeting cards and calendars, which can be found at Castle Antiques & Cafe in Haliburton Village, made from eco-friendly materials. She also creates abstract paintings, viewing them as a deeply personal counterpoint to her photography.

"My painting, it's got to be something that's more personal, how I express myself as an artist," she said.

The road hasn't always been smooth. Her time in Haliburton involved living in a trailer while navigating building permit delays, financing hurdles, and the pandemic. Additionally, managing health issues made the isolation of rural living difficult.

Krisko explained that the move to Muskoka offers a practical solution. It places her husband closer to construction work at the new hospitals in Huntsville and Bracebridge, and places her closer to multi-level medical care.

"Having multiple health issues and being close to a hospital has been a priority," she said. "It's kind of a fresh start."

Despite the challenges, she said the move promises new artistic inspiration. Her new property features four acres of marshland, which the photographer anticipates will be teeming with the wildlife she loves to capture.

"It's really cool, it's all flat ... it's got a marshland in it," Krisko explained. "There's a lot of water right there, so there will be more types of birds."

When asked to describe her body of work as she prepares to pack up her lenses, she paused for a few moments before settling on a phrase that perfectly encapsulates her time in the Highlands.

"A portrait of nature," she said. "I find a lot of my stuff is more up close ... a moment in nature."

Krisko said she plans to maintain her connections with the Haliburton art community. For now, she is looking forward to December 10, when the new property closes.

"All my equipment needs to be cleaned. I'm looking forward to getting my big lenses out again," she said. "It's a fresh start and a fresh canvas."

points of view

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Prioritizing people

Editorial

Emily Stonehouse

I WAS ready to start this editorial, flying the flag with bold letters crying 'Long Live the Library'.

We all know that during budget talks, the first victim to the chopping block is the library, followed closely by any sort of arts and culture in the community.

And I am not necessarily giving a dig at the process. I value roads and public works as well. I recognize the need to have them in decent shape to keep our communities afloat.

But in a past life, I was the supervisor for the Minden Hills Cultural Centre, and I went to bat more than once to make my case for why we need the arts in the community. Out of all the departments within the Township of Minden Hills during my time as a senior staffer, the Cultural Centre continued to get the short end of the stick. And I can guarantee that was not from lack of trying.

But while I had my flag prepped, ready for war with county council when I saw their liaison reports to slash the proposed budget by nearly 25 per cent, I will admit that I didn't know the full story.

For the past few years, the library has ended their fiscal season with a surplus, allowing them to build up a reserve of sorts. And while cutting the budget this year and using up those cached surpluses may not put them in an ideal position when 2027 budgeting rolls around, I recognize the logic behind lowering the ask amount to better align with spending patterns in recent years.

I am hoping the final number finds a bit of middle ground. In the ping pong conversation that is budget deliberations, there is often a little wiggle room.

But what I was pleasantly surprised to see was that every county councillor made a point of going on the record to say they value the library. Andrea Brown, the CEO and chief librarian for Haliburton County painted an outside-the-box picture of library services.

It's not just books and library cards (though those do carry tremendous value); it's also WiFi, clean and accessible washrooms, varied, professional programming, a safe and warm space to retreat from the cold.

Libraries are community hubs for everyone along the socioeconomic spectrum, all ages, all backgrounds, all hobbies and passions and interests.

So to hear every representative from each lower tier say they value the contributions of our libraries, that was refreshing.

While the budget meeting dragged at times (as they often tend to do), it was a different meeting than I had seen before. I recall budget meetings where each line item was read out loud - a careful game of pie in the sky - throwing it all out there to see what sticks.

There was a human value to this meeting, though. Between the library and the introduction of the community health and well-being levy - a 0.5 per cent tax increase that would go towards protecting the most vulnerable in the community through housing, harm reduction, senior supports, and emergency or emerging health pressures - it was a breath of fresh air to hear the plights of our community coming to the table.

It wasn't just about roads and potholes. It was about how we can lift up the people in our community who continue to fall through the cracks.

Kudos to the county and library staff, who prioritized people this time around, and got the conversation started on a larger stage.

And to the county councillors present and future, let's continue on this path of community care.

Senior abuse

Pair, Ponder

Poke, Peel

Fay Martin

AS SOME of my readers know, much of my professional life was in the field of child welfare, including child protection. It was an impossible job. Once, early in my career, a principal, when we'd finished our conversation about the child in question, asked me why a smart young thing like me was doing this work. With the misplaced confidence of a 21-year-old, I said it was devilishly difficult work and required the best and the brightest, which I guessed was me. I may have been wrong about that, but I wasn't wrong about the complexity of the work.

The child protection job was to follow up on a complaint about a child being abused or neglected by their caregiver by investigating to the point where you could defend a decision to either take the child into care or leave them in parental care, perhaps (in the olden days) with a measure of support or surveillance in place. If you opted to remove the child from their home – to apprehend them (the language, unfortunately, suggesting the child was the perp, even though the sins of omission or commission were attributed to parent or parents) – you had to defend your decision before the court. The parent could oppose the action, and in a well-resourced world might have the assistance of legal representation. If you decided there was no basis to the concern (or, if you chose to be simplistic, the complaint), you could close the file, and were responsible for that decision only to your supervisor, who may or may not read the report analytically. If you decided to leave the child with the parent but impose some conditions, you had to go to court to defend your decision and declare the intervention plan, and report progress to the court within a specified time.

There are clearly many loopholes in this system. It may, however, as Churchill is purported to have said about democracy, be better than the alternatives.

And, clearly, it is better than the system we have in place to manage senior abuse. Which is nothing: there is no Canadian legislation that relates specifically to mistreatment of seniors. And therefore there is no resourced system, robust or otherwise, to investigate and intervene in problematic circumstances.

Arguably seniors are potentially at greater risk for abuse and neglect than are children. The vulnerability of children lies in their dependence on adults for the necessities of life. Ditto for seniors.

And, it is increasingly recognized, dependency is the crucial element in intimate partner abuse that needs to be taken into consideration in assessing situations.

Bill C-332 - Coercive Control of Intimate Partners - was introduced as a private NDP bill in the Canadian legislature in June 2024 and gained unanimous support from all parties, only to die in the Senate when government prorogued in January 2025. It did not specify seniors as among the protected population, even though they, like spouses, and children, live within 'relationships of trust and dependence'.

So, to put these things together, seniors are apt to be cared for by family as they become increasingly dependent, and as alternative living arrangements become unavailable or unaffordable or both, and there is no legislation or mechanism protecting them from abuse in this situation.

And yet, there are several reasons why they may be more vulnerable than children.

What are these reasons? One is that they are more likely to be isolated. Children are required by law to attend school, so there are eyes on them, and investigation if they do not attend. There is no such safeguard for seniors.

Another is that seniors may have assets that others want to have or to control. Abhorrent as the thought is that spouses or adult children would sacrifice their loved-one's well-being to greed, it has been known to happen. Even in families where the asset is not huge.

A third is that seniors can misbehave, in ways that range from annoying to dangerous, especially as their cognitive capacity declines and/or their frustration mounts. The person assuming responsible for them needs to manage that behaviour. The line between containment and punishment is fluid. Caregivers are human: they can lose their perspective, their tempers, their judgement. (This is the core of child welfare assessment, which recognizes that children can be frustrating.)

A fourth is that seniors are not necessarily nice people, and perhaps they never were, but dependence makes it more likely that bad behaviour will not be tolerated. Retribution is a possibility.

I wish there were an easy pathway to ensuring seniors are safe and well cared for. I don't know what it is, no more than I know how a child welfare system would reliably provide as good a childhood as a well-functioning home. I am truly sorry about that.

points of view

Tuttu Frutti

LAST WEEK, I was catching up with my friend Tom when the 1955 Little Richard song *Tutti Frutti* came up, as is frequently the case when two old men talk.

This led me to ask the age-old question – one that has been on my mind since about 1966.

"Who is this Paul Rudy guy so prominently mentioned in the song?" I asked.

Tom, who is wise in the lore of 70-year-old lyrics, promptly asked me what I was talking about – although in far less polite terms than I could put in print.

"You know," I said. "Tutti frutti, Paul Rudy ... Tutti frutti, Paul Rudy ... Awop-bop-a-loo-mop, alop bom bom … "

But instead of acknowledging that my rendition of that famous line in that classic song was acoustically perfect, Tom once again asked, "What are you talking about? The lyric is 'Tutti frutti, oh Rudy, a-bop-a-loo-mop, alop bom bom.' "

Loon Tales

Steve Galea

As you might expect, a heated debate ensued, and finally, when neither side budged, we turned to the keeper of all knowledge, a source of truth that has never let anyone down – The World Wide Web.

And here's the thing. According to the World Wide Web, I have been wrong all these years. Apparently, there is no Paul Rudy in the song *Tutti Frutti*.

Let me just repeat that: There is no Paul Rudy in the song *Tutti Frutti*.

Now let that sink in.

Before you start writing angry letters disputing this, hear me out. I don't buy it either.

But, until the fact checker at the World Wide Web corrects this unfortunate mistake, I feel a responsibility to put this information out there. I would hate for others to fall into that same embarrassing trap.

Sure, I still refuse to accept or admit that my friend was right.

For, if I do accept this, I have to ask myself, what else have I been wrong about?

Right now, you are probably thinking that I might be one of those stubborn people who refuses to accept when they are wrong. Nothing could be further from the truth. In fact, I freely acknowledge that I might have been wrong as many as three times in my 63 years on this planet.

This could make it four, I suppose, though it seems unlikely.

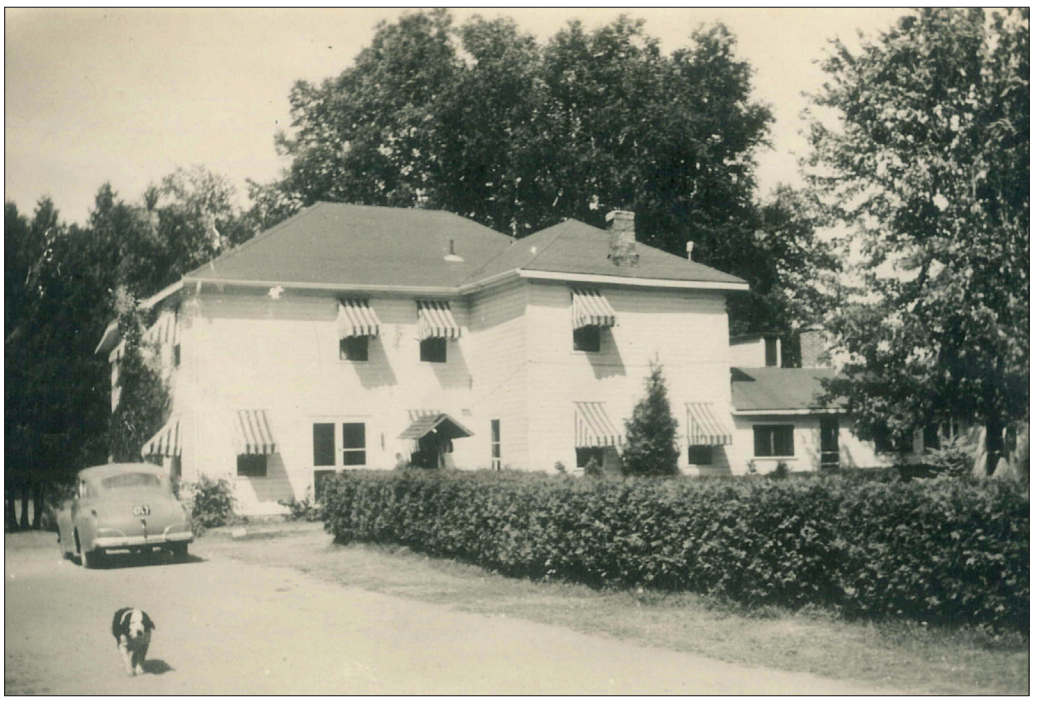
Of course, I am not going to make a big deal of it. And neither should you. Anyone can be wrong, and that includes me.

For instance, on the weekend I went to the library book sale and purchased a book called MI6, which, at first, I thought was about a kid who forgot how old he was. (It turns out it is about the British spy agency.)

Having said that, when you get to a certain age, you don't want to be wrong. Mostly because, as you get older, your job is to collect important pieces of wisdom to impart upon future generations. So far, my collection includes "It's futile to blame the other person if there are only two of you on the elevator," and "Never get on an elevator with only one other person."

As this column illustrates, you should never be too proud to admit you are wrong.

And I truly hope this wisdom has made us all a Little Richard.



pic of the past

Red Umbrella Inn in Carnarvon. Based on the style of vehicle in the driveway, when do you think this photo was taken? If you are interested in submitting your guess, send along to emily@haliburtonpress.com.

Generosity

WHEN WE feel grateful, something inside us relaxes. There is a sense of returning home, of settling back into ourselves. Gratitude reminds us of what we love, and in that feeling of abundance, generosity rises naturally - quiet, warm, unforced.

We are, at our core, a generous community. Goodness lives everywhere here. It lives in the people who volunteer, who care for loved ones, who create, advocate, and show up in ways that often go unseen. It takes all of us to weave a healthy, compassionate place to live. And the beauty is that generosity doesn't look just one way. We each give what we can, when we can. Every offering - large or small - matters.

This time of year, generosity becomes even more meaningful. Christmas can be joyful, comforting, and full of celebration for many. And for many others, it can be a time of heaviness, worry, or loneliness. We live in a place where some have more than enough, and some are struggling with groceries, heating costs, and the basic needs of daily life. These contrasts ask us to soften, to pay attention, and to extend a hand where we are able.

I often think of the Buddhist concept of *dana*. Dana means "giving," but it points to something deeper than the act itself. It is the practice of opening the heart - of allowing compassion, tenderness, and interconnectedness to guide us. Dana asks us to remember that we belong to each other. Jack Kornfield's new book, *We Are All in This Together*, captures this beautifully, even in its title. We share this planet, this community, this moment in time. And because we share it, supporting each other is not just kind - it is essential.

Generosity isn't only the work of governments or organizations. It grows in the everyday choices of ordinary people. It shows up in conversations, rides offered, meals shared, and time volunteered. It shows up in the efforts of community members who quietly devote themselves to the wellbeing of others.

Right now, I'm collaborating with Bessie Sullivan and the wonderful staff at the Wellness Hub in the Haliburton Industrial Park to offer a series of fitness classes as fundraisers for the Haliburton Food Bank. Bessie volunteers at the food bank and there are many people that rely on its services - including many seniors whose pensions simply cannot keep up with today's costs. I think all of us have felt the sting of rising grocery prices; for some, that sting is a daily reality.

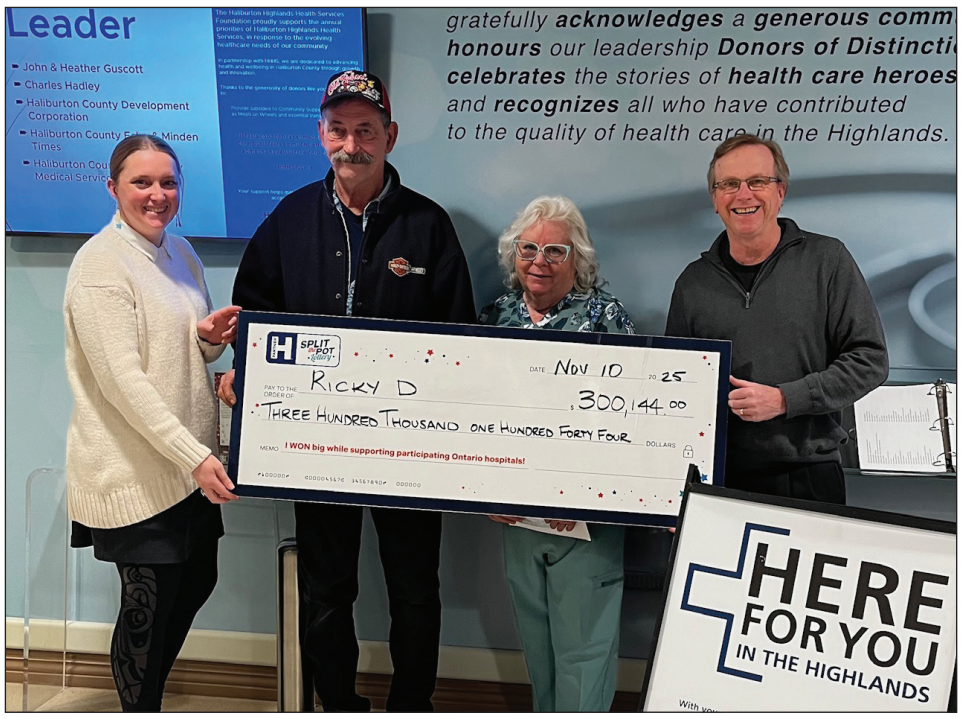
Tales from the great Green meadow

Lynda Shadbolt

As a busy caregiver who still works part-time, my own capacity to give is limited. But generosity isn't measured by size - it's measured by sincerity. One thing I can offer is a quiet Sunday morning yoga class at the Wellness Hub, by donation. We'll move slowly, breathe deeply, and finish with a long, nourishing relaxation. All proceeds will go directly to the food bank. Other staff at the hub will be offering spin, weight lifting and other classes by donation.

The slow flow vinyasa class will be Sunday, Dec. 7 at 10 a.m. If you feel called to join, text me at 705-854-0196 or email haliburtonyoga@gmail.com. Space is limited, and a Zoom option is available for those who prefer to practice from home.

Thank you - for showing up, for caring, for giving in the ways that you can. Your generosity matters more than you know.


Leader
John & Heather Guscott
Charles Hadley
Haliburton County Development Corporation
Haliburton County Ed... & Minden Times
Haliburton Cou... Medical Service
gratefully acknowledges a generous comm
honours our leadership Donors of Distincti
celebrates the stories of health care heroes
and recognizes all who have contributed
to the quality of health care in the Highlands.
SPLIT THE POT
DATE NOV 10 25
RICKY D
$ 300,144.00
THREE HUNDRED THOUSAND ONE HUNDRED FORTY FOUR
DOLLARS
I WON big while supporting participating Ontario hospitals!
HERE FOR YOU IN THE HIGHLANDS

The Haliburton Highlands Health Services Foundation
gratefully acknowledges a generous community,
honours our leadership Donors of Distinction,
celebrates the stories of health care heroes,
and recognizes all who have contributed
to the quality of health... in the Highlands.
SPLIT THE POT
DATE NOV 10 25
JESSE W.
$ 25,000
TWENTY-FIVE THOUSAND
DOLLARS
I WON big while supporting participating Ontario hospitals!

Winning numbers

Locals Jesse Woodward, pictured to the right, and Ricky Danilko, pictured above, won big in the Ontario Split the Pot Lottery. Proceeds from the lottery goes towards supporting the local hospital. Pictured, Woodward and Danilko stand with HHHSF Melanie Klodt Wong, Executive Director and David Blodgett, Chair of the Board. /submitted

Minden Memories

Built in winter 1955, the old Minden Hospital (which was later the Minden Animal Hospital) is shown here with workers shingling the roof, with the Graham farm visible in the background. /Photo courtesy of the Minden Hills Cultural Centre.

letters to the editor

Your trash is not our treasure

To the Editor,

The Haliburton Rotary Club is progressing well with the implementation of our $200,000 makeover of Skyline Park including the finishing of one of two planned picnic shelters this November.

While finishing the picnic shelter over the past few weeks we were dismayed by a significant accumulation of garbage at the park that had not been picked up. This is because the maintenance contract for the park through the Ministry of Transportation does not involve garbage pick up from Nov. 1 to April 30 each year.

Rotary volunteers stepped in and cleaned up the accumulated garbage and we filled an entire pick up truck full of garbage left by visitors to the park. It is clear the vast majority of the garbage was household garbage bags that have no business being left at the park at any time of the year. Household garbage should be taken home by cottagers or taken to the Dysart land fill and should not be left at Skyline Park. Please respect the beauty of this park and our attempt to bring it back to its former glory by not leaving household garbage bags in the garbage bins which are provided for the convenience of day visitors to the park.

Charles Wheeler, Haliburton

Fast Lane Monday afternoon bowling league

Fast Lane Top Bowling Scores Nov. 24

Women
High Single
Cathy Snell 223
High Single with Handicap
Norma Terro 253
High Triple
Cathy Snell 605
High Triple with Handicap
Norma Terro 688

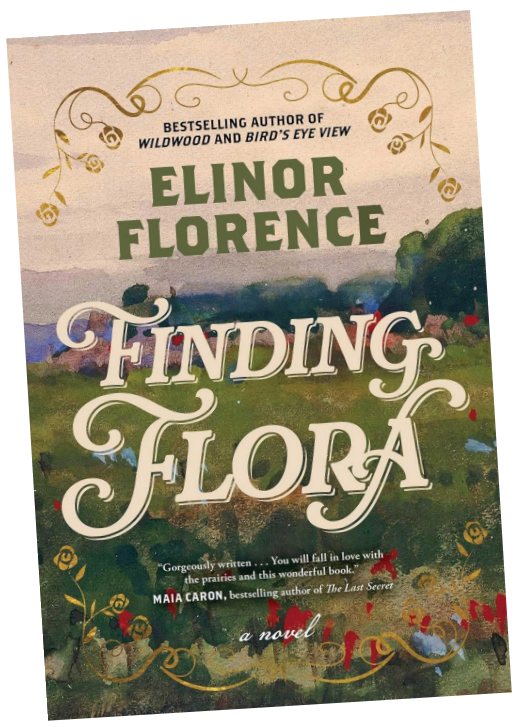
Men
High Single
Robert Terro 210
High Single with Handicap
Robert Terro 252
High Triple
Robert Terro 548
High Triple with Handicap
Robert Terro 674

New bowlers are welcome to join!

Submitted

HALIBURTON COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY

Book of the Week


BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF WILDWOOD AND BIRD'S EYE VIEW
ELINOR FLORENCE
FINDING FLORA
"Gorgeously written . . . You will fall in love with the prairies and this wonderful book."
MAIA CARON, bestselling author of The Last Secret
a novel

In 1905, Scottish immigrant Flora Craigie leaps from a moving train to escape her abusive husband and start fresh on the Alberta prairie. Determined to survive, she joins a resilient group of women homesteaders—a widow with three children, a Métis horse trainer, and two American women raising chickens—who defy the odds to carve out lives of their own. But when government agents threaten their land and Flora's past comes chasing after her, the women must stand together to protect their freedom and each other.

Finding Flora by Elinor Florence is available at the Haliburton County Public Library as a book or Book Club Set. Visit haliburtonlibrary.ca to place a hold or learn more.

Barker's latest play brings joy from chaos

THOMAS SMITH
Journalist

Mary Barker, Wilberforce's very own playwright, has her latest play *Tinsel, Turkey, and Turmoil* performed at the Lloyd Watson Community Centre on Nov. 22 and 23. A laugh riot, the community centre was packed with over 70 audience members. /THOMAS SMITH staff

If the Grinch lives in Wilberforce, his heart would have grown two sizes after seeing the Loop Troupe's *Tinsel, Turkey, and Turmoil* at the Lloyd Watson Community Centre.

Performed on Nov. 22 and 23, the Wilberforce community hub was filled to the brim with audience members. For the Sunday show, over 70 seats were occupied with audience members ready for some much needed holiday cheer.

Tinsel, Turkey, and Turmoil was written by local community member Mary Barker. Notably, Barker has written for the Loop Troupe before with *Riches and Ransom: Who Kidnapped Miss Priscilla Bing?,* which was performed in April of this year.

Barker succeeds again with a play that is perfect for the beginning of the holiday season.

The main character, Carol, played by Jodi Rupnow, learns that her mother has had her flight delayed to return home due to an unfortunate incident with an emotional support goose.

When she realizes that she needs to cook Christmas dinner on her own, nothing seems to go her way. Especially since she is terrified to touch the turkey.

Stan, played by Philip Lawr, Carol's brother, is a dead-beat brother who tries his best to get the turkey thawed by showering with it - soap and all. Working as a local mall Santa, Lawr's comedic timing and stage presence commanded the audience's attention. If you looked away, you may miss his subtle gag or facial expression that squeezes a chuckle out of you.

It was difficult to take your eyes off the character. Whenever Stan entered, you had no idea how much clothing he would be wearing, or what he would have on.

Every family has a relative that cannot seem to keep a steady job out of their own choices.

While trying to figure out the turkey, family members and community members flood into the house. Aunts, cousins, neighbours, the reverend, and more. At the end of the show, 16 actors could be seen on stage at the same time.

Gary Mount, playing Nick, is the uncle that we all have. He was camouflaged in the recliner, only rising to crack a witty joke. When dinner doesn't come his way, he is the first one to order McDonalds directly to the door, much to the other character's chagrin.

Advertising itself as a crisis was truthful and I am happy that I stayed to watch the chaos.

Aunt Millie, played by Linda Ladd, is Carol's aunt with a strong penchant for a stiff drink. Ladd's comedic timing was commendable and sometimes too real, with the character falling asleep from drinking so heavily. It made you want to hide the bottles on her before they were emptied.

Tinsel, Turkey, and Turmoil was performed in memory of Susan Mortimer. Mortimer was cast as Mavis in the production, but passed before feeling the lights of the stage one last time.

"We know she would have done it with her trademark sparkle and grace," writes the programme.

Tinsel, Turkey, and Turmoil left you with tears in your eyes from laughter. It felt like you were a bug on the wall of a dysfunctional family's holiday traditions. Yet, in our own way, are we not all a bit dysfunctional?

Truly a success, I wait with bated breath to experience Barker's next piece.

During the intermission, baked goods and drinks were served by donation. For a dollar, two baked goods could be purchased and gobbled down during the show. An exceptionally good deal, with delicious goods available.

Perhaps watching the chaos makes you grateful for your own traditions.

When everything isn't going your way this Christmas season and the turkey gets burned, you can always order McDonalds.

Get The Word Out
Let people know about your event.
Send it in to our FREE community events listing in the Haliburton Echo, Minden Times and County Life.
Email the basics to: classifieds@haliburtonpress.com.

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Charities working to bring Christmas magic to every child

ADAM FRISK
Journalist

As the holiday season arrives in Haliburton, local charities are stressing the importance of ensuring every child, from infants to teenagers, has a gift to open on Christmas morning.

While the need for food and essential resources remains critical, local programs are focusing on delivering joy, hope, and crucial stress relief to struggling families in the Haliburton area. Inclusion is also a key part for the local organizations.

"Everything that we do is about making sure that they feel included in the community and kind of are having these same experiences that every child should be having," Carrie Truman, executive director of Kawartha-Haliburton Children's Foundation, said in a telephone interview. "So that when they go to school after the holiday break, they feel included. They can also talk about their new toys and everything, and that they feel included with everything that's going on."

The Central Food Network echoed this sentiment, noting the desire for joy and excitement on Christmas morning.

"It's the magic of the season," said Tina Jackson, executive director of Central Food Network. "Everybody wants to have that bit of joy on Christmas morning, and it's important that every child gets that."

Jackson said the gifts also provide support for parents in households that are already struggling with basic necessities. With the added financial pressure of the holiday season and the rising winter costs, it can feel overwhelming.

"For many of the households that we're helping, there is such a high level of stress and anxiety year-round, but particularly during the holidays," she explained. "Just for parents alone, the stress relief of knowing that they've got an extra hand, I think takes a lot of the pressure off."

There are several ways residents can donate this holiday season.

The children's foundation, in conjunction with LCBO locations throughout Haliburton, launched its annual Santa's Sleigh initiative. The program fulfills specific wish lists made by children involved with the foundation. People can visit LCBO stores in Minden, Haliburton, Wilberforce, Gooderham, and Kinmount, and pick up a tag with a child's name on it, along with a gift request, and return the purchased item and tag back to the liquor store. The deadline for toy drop-offs is December 10.

The Central Food Network offers hampers and toys for children up to age 18. Registration for families needing assistance is open to anyone in the community who is struggling, not just those already registered with the food bank. The deadline for family registration is December 5. Toy donations can be made at Agnews, Glecoffs, Cardiff Country Store, and Canadian Tire Bancroft. Both food and toys can also be donated at Foodland Wilberforce and Wilberforce Gas Station.

Music for the ages

Haliburton Highlands Secondary School opened their doors to the public last Thursday for the first Coffee House of the year. The evening featured Hal High students and staff performing and playing instruments, and welcomed local music talent to collaborate with the high school students, and showcase a variety of musical genres and sounds. /ADAM FRISK staff

Haliburton's Tom Oliver performs during HHSS Red Hawks Coffee House on Thursday.

Molly moves on

EMILY STONEHOUSE

Editor

Molly and her husband, Guy, stand proudly in front of their newly sold sign. Molly's has been a staple in Minden for the past 15 years, and the location will remain a restaurant in the future. /photo submitted by Lynda Litwin

"I'm happy wherever I am," said Molly McInerney, reflecting on her years of business in the heart of Minden.

It's a sentiment that she will be taking into her next stage of life: retirement.

As of Dec. 15, Molly's Market Bakery on Bobcaygeon Road will be changing hands. "It's going to be a restaurant still," McInerney noted, "which is great. They plan on doing breakfast, lunch, and dinner."

The restaurant has been a staple in the community for the past 15 years, with McInerney setting up in 2010. Since then, the restaurant has changed gears a few times, shifting from a sit-in restaurant to a bakery two years ago. "People were sad the restaurant was gone," said McInerney, "but regular customers were really supportive and understood."

For the past three years, the business and building has been for sale. McInerney noted that she was waiting for the right person to come along and set up shop. This newspaper will be providing coverage on the new ownership upon their opening in December.

McInerney is no stranger to the hospitality industry. Before starting Molly's, she ran a little shop downtown. It's a part of her, and the pride of place courses through her veins. But that doesn't mean she's going to necessarily miss the momentum of restaurant ownership.

"I'm not sad at all," she laughed. "Now I can start getting involved in the things I used to like getting involved in. I like to be a part of the community. I'm not going to dive into a thousand things at once, but I'll be able to get into things I didn't have time for."

McInerney cited gardening and joining the local Rotary club as big areas of interest as she settles into retirement. While she will take a little break over the holidays to rest and recuperate, she is looking forward to easing into the next chapter in the new year.

As for Molly's products, she is trying to move as much as she can. She is also sending food to Wintergreen in Gelert and Cottage County Bakery in Carnarvon to sell from additional locations, in an effort to use up the premade product. Gift certificates can be used right up to the closing date in mid-December.

McInerney is looking forward to seeing the next chapter of the restaurant take shape, while she eases into a restful retirement. "I'll definitely support them," she said. "I'm not entirely sure what their vision is, but I will support it for sure."

Returning champ offering fitness goals support

THOMAS SMITH

Journalist

Karen Koehler receives a gold medal in her canicross event at the recent 2025 IFSS Dryland Mushing World Championship. /submitted

Nothing can stop Karen Koehler and her canine companions.

At the International Federation of Sledding Sports 2025 Dryland Championships held in Minocqua, Wisconsin, Koehler returned to Haliburton County triumphantly with both a gold and silver medal.

Having visited Minocqua last year, Koehler says that the course for the championships this year has had more hills, posing a challenge to both her, and her dogs Buncho and Really.

Buncho, at nine years old, is a faster dog than Koehler normally races with. Koehler and Buncho competed in canicross and with the hills, Koehler had to be careful while travelling downhills to not overpower Buncho during the canicross competition.

On Sunday, Koehler raced in the bikejoring competition with her dog Really.

Racing over two days by bikejoring and running, the championships were muddy and a challenge for Koehler and her dogs to conquer.

Racing in the women's 50+ age group, Koehler won a gold in canicross and a silver medal in bikejoring.

Koehler says that after she won gold and heard the Canadian anthem, she was overcome with emotion.

"It was crazy," said Koehler.

This past September, Koehler contributed to a book titled *Passion, Purpose, and Possibilities: Transforming Dreams Into Reality*. In the book, Koehler shares her inspiring story of overcoming her fears and her journey with fitness towards racing with her dogs. Cathay Derksen is the primary author, and 23 other women contributed to the book.

The book has become a bestseller. To celebrate her accomplishment, Koehler visited New York City to see the book advertised in Times Square.

Koehler says that her writings in the book encapsulate what she strives to offer others with her health and life business, for people to conquer their fears and discover new things about themselves.

When Koehler first started racing with her dogs, she did not always take home medals. It was through perseverance and her own training that she began to take home gold.

Now, Koehler feels at the peak of her athletic career. With her coaching business still getting started, she hopes to reach more people and help change lives.

With medical services lacking in Ontario, improving your health and increasing your fitness levels can not only save you anguish, but help you financially as well, says Koehler.

As part of her coaching process, Koehler can teach you how to build a fitness community, tricks for working out at home, how to exercise outside year round, and healthy eating habits.

"A lot of obstacles are in our mind," said Koehler. "We live in a beautiful area. We need to get out of our homes and walk."

With less than $200, it is possible to have all the fitness equipment you need to stay in shape and see results.

Koehler's business, Buncho Momentum, can be found at bunchomomentum.com. You can also find her latest posts and event listings on her Facebook page of the same name.

"If people want to make a change, you need to get committed to the why," said Koehler. "I wanted to play with my dogs."

MH Council dodges rent protection discussion

THOMAS SMITH

Journalist

When you think of affordable housing, you think of new builds.

However, to continue with affordable housing and keep people housed, we need to protect our tenants.

In November of this year, the community of Wawa wrote a letter regarding the removal of rent control in 2018. Excessive yearly rent increases are becoming a huge issue in Wawa. Malicious rent increases can be used to force tenants out of their homes, be priced out of their communities, and increase mental anguish of those wanting to pay for their rent. It is not uncommon for landlords to fake renovations to force tenants to leave.

On the other side of the coin, landlords are essential for offering affordable housing and rentable properties.

Wawa wrote to Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario and both their MP and MPP for their endorsement to provide adequate protection against excessive and malicious rent increases for rental units.

Minden Mayor Bob Carter said that Wawa's resolution is related to Bill-60. Bill-60 is to 'cut red tape' to support new housing opportunities, strengthen infrastructure and stimulate the rental market. Later in the meeting, notable changes include reducing eviction notices to seven days instead of 14, landlords evicting for personal use may do so with 120 days notice, tenants needing to pay 50 per cent of unpaid payments to raise issues at an eviction hearing, and the regulation of the Landlord Tenant Board's ability to delay or overturn evictions.

Councillor Pam Sayne asked council to consider voicing their support to Wawa.

"This is a huge issue on both sides," said Mayor Carter. "I can tell you that from the perspective of the housing corporation that we still have huge problems with people who are taking away the enjoyment of the building. It still takes us way over a year for the process [of removing a tenant] and even then, we don't get a favourable outcome."

"No matter how heinous the crimes of the person that is involved. Yes, I am talking as a landlord," said Carter. "The rent control and renovictions and various incendiary things that are happening [is] a very big problem."

Carter says that when a solution is put forward, it often only helps 51 per cent of those involved. When tenants are supported, it makes life more difficult for landlords.

"This is a growing issue and it is one that I think Wawa is taking the lead on," replied Sayne. "I would like to support them on this. They are looking at this from the rural lens which is important for us to recognize and support them on this."

Sayne noted that she has experienced suing a tenant family for not paying rent. She also clarified that Wawa's resolution does not mention Bill-60 and that they cannot get into the weeds of the bill.

A discussion regarding protecting Minden's tenants will come another day.

Council voted in favour of voicing their support towards Wawa.

Russell Landing project nearly completed

THOMAS SMITH

Journalist

Visitors to Kawagama Lake are looking forward to the new retaining wall for accessing their lake.

In May of last year, Algonquin Highlands sought input from the community towards the rehabilitation project at Russell Landing on Kawagama Lake. The project includes improved parking, stair access, railings, a new concrete retaining wall, and crib and decking.

A well travelled seasonal destination, the landing site is an important site of access for water access properties, says Brian W. Mulholland, project manager for Algonquin Highlands. Russell Landing also allows visitors to moor their boats, launch small watercraft, allow access to the nearby marina, and access for construction.

As an immediate need for the community, the landing site was shut down on Oct. 14. The wood used for the former structure had finally reached the end of its life.

Throughout the rehabilitation project, Mulholland says that their social media sites have had many encouraging comments from the community.

"Timelines were considered to commence on-site work after the cottaging and boating seasons were over, wherein the impact on residents would be lessened," said Mulholland.

The contractor, A2Z Civil Company, is an Ontario-based construction company that won AH's bid for the project. They utilize a small team with the owner staying present on the worksite.

"Having the owner on site throughout the work stages provides a level of streamlining to keep the project on schedule and operating fluently," he said.

With over a decade of experience, A2Z Civil Company has had no setbacks during the project, from demolition to building the new structures.

The new retaining wall and footing has been installed and backfill material has been placed.

Disposal of construction debris was conducted by AH's Public Works Department, helping to reduce overall costs of the project.

Mulholland says that the low water levels in the fall and mild weather have greatly helped with environmental mitigation measures and placing the foundation near the water's edge.

"The rehabilitation work is progressing very well and is estimated to be at 80 per cent completion," said Mulholland.

Over the next few weeks, the new railings and boat bumpers will be installed.

With the final parts of the project to be completed in the fall, Mulholland is optimistic that the Russell Landing site will be operational for the public this summer.

Council plans for water future

from page 1

dumping should have been included with their rate study.

"We are not charging the proper amounts to some of these multiresidential facilities," said McKelvey. "We really can't accept what the proposals are here without having proper information."

Good news for those that drink Lutterworth water, Younker says that it is not recommended to increase the flat rate to those getting water from the smaller system.

McKelvey also asked about who is paying only the flat rate in Minden. Timmins was unable to provide a full explanation.

Kawartha Lakes Haliburton Housing Corporation's new 35 unit affordable housing was brought up in the conversation. McKelvey wants to know if those living in the new units will be paying their fair share.

"We will take this away, we heard many comments and questions and will come back with as much as that prepared for council to review at budget time," said Timmins.

With so many questions and concerns from council, more information is needed before moving forward with any water rate price increases.

Younker reported that he is happy to revise the report in any way, as long as he is provided with the updated information from staff.

Staanworth Non-Profit Housing Corporation
Is looking for a
Volunteer Board Member

Staanworth Non-Profit Housing Corporation is seeking an individual to join our Board of Directors.

Our organization manages three properties including Staanworth Terrace and Court as well as Floralan and provides housing for 145 individuals in Minden. We are committed to providing safe, well-maintained homes and fostering a positive community for our tenants.

Serving on the Board is a rewarding volunteer opportunity to contribute your skills and experience to support local housing, help guide organizational decisions, and make a difference in your community.

Individuals with experience in property management, finance, maintenance, community service, or governance are encouraged to apply, but all interested community members are welcome.

If interested, please submit a Letter of Interest on or before December 26, 2025 to:

Paula Ingram, Property Manager
manager@staanworth.ca
Staanworth Non-Profit Housing Corporation

MH raises flag for abuse prevention

THOMAS SMITH

Journalist

For those who do not know, November is Women Abuse Prevention month in Ontario.

In December of last year, domestic violence was declared an epidemic in Haliburton County.

"We know that 30 per cent of women over the age of 15 experience gender-based violence," reported Kim Dolan to Minden Hills Council in 2024. "It happens to our girls, our friends, our mothers, our aunties and we've worked with many women who are 70 and older."

In a Nov. 18 letter to Minden Hills Council, YWCA Peterborough Haliburton wrote to Council for their support in raising the Wrapped in Courage flag.

The letter asked Council to consider raising the flag on International Day for Ending Violence Against Women, which was on Nov. 25.

The YWCA Women's Centre of Haliburton County is an essential resource for women and families that need support for attending medical appointments and case conferences, navigating family court and Children's Aid Society's systems, accessing a family lawyer, and access to a counsellor to assist with recovering from violence and trauma.

For those in emergent need, there is the Haliburton Emergency Rural SafeSpace for up to two families to temporarily remove themselves from unlivable situations.

In 2013, the Ontario Association of Interval and Transition Houses started the Wrapped in Courage campaign in a call to increase funding for emergency services for families and to bring awareness to the services in Ontario's communities. The purple scarves are a reminder to work towards change that is still desperately needed. The Wrapped in Courage campaign sells Fair Trade purple scarves through their website, wrappedincourage.ca. Funds from the scarves support the campaign itself.

Councillor McKelvey requested that the Wrapped in Courage campaign be added to a list of pre-approved flags to avoid another tardy approval.

While the International Day for Ending Violence Against Women has passed, the Wrapped in Courage flag will be flown at the Minden Hills township office until Dec. 10.

Council approved the request unanimously.

Have a thought, comment or opinion you'd like to share?

Send a letter to the editor to
emily@haliburtonpress.com

Minden approaches fire mutual aid agreement

THOMAS SMITH

Journalist

Minden may be better protected from fires by the end of the year.

Minden Hills Fire Department and Bracebridge Fire Department have a special relationship. With Bracebridge Fire Department's Station #2 located within a half hour of Minden, it makes perfect sense for the fire departments to come to each other's aid in a time of dire crisis.

With only a handshake agreement, Minden Hills Fire Chief Don Kruger, is working on making that agreement official.

As part of Minden Hills' Fire Master Plan, Kruger met with Bracebridge Fire Department's Fire Chief Kevin Plested in the summer.

"Conversations went well, I wrote a draft agreement and sent it to Chief Plested, he got back to me not that long ago," said Kruger. "I am just waiting to hear how that went."

With Plested's agreement, Kruger hopes that the fire mutual aid agreement will bring peace of mind and better safety to both community members and our firefighters.

"If approved by both municipal councils the agreement would mean aid would be sent when requested, if possible," said Kruger. "The agreement is for structure fires (more so on the Bracebridge side) and wildland fires (more so on the Minden Hills side)."

While Minden Hills has dedicated volunteer firefighters, Bracebridge has full-time staff and two stations, says Kruger. While both fire department's apparatuses are similar, Bracebridge does have an aerial truck.

The communications between both fire departments have been going well.

"We both agreed that it could be helpful under certain circumstances, and neither side was looking for any money to change hands if it did," he said.

Once the matter has been through Bracebridge's council, an official mutual aid agreement will be drafted between the departments.

"As a fire service we are always looking to make things better and safer for the residents we protect and for the firefighters that do the work."

Spreading Christmas cheer

Twinkle lights, carols, and a roaring bonfire welcomed the community of Stanhope together last Friday for their annual tree raising. The festive evening narrowly missed the snowstorm that slammed the county on Saturday evening. /TIM YANO staff photographer

www.mindenhills.ca **In Case of Emergency Dial 911 / After-Hours Municipal Emergency Dial 1-866-856-3247**

THE TOWNSHIP OF MINDEN HILLS
IN SEASON, EVERY SEASON

COUNCIL MEETINGS VIRTUAL & IN-PERSON

Council and Closed Session meetings are currently being conducted in-person (Council Chambers, 7 Milne St., Minden) and with electronic participation. The scheduled upcoming meetings are:

December 11 – Regular Council Meeting

December 15 – Special Council Meeting

Members of the Public are invited to observe Council proceedings by attending in-person or via the live-stream link.

MINDEN HILLS CULTURAL CENTRE

• A selection of artwork from the Agnes Jamieson Gallery's permanent collection, as well as new acquisitions, is now on display. The Gallery is open Tuesday to Saturday from 10 am – 4 pm. All are welcome. Admission is by donation.
• We are hosting a free screening of the documentary Sons (2024) on Thursday, December 4 at 1:00 p.m. Directed by Newfoundland filmmaker Justin Simms, this deeply personal National Film Board documentary follows the first eight years of the life of Simms' son Jude, exploring what it means to raise a boy in today's world. The film is presented in partnership with the Haliburton County Public Library. Admission is free. No pre-registration is required.

For information on all the programs and exhibits offered at the Minden Hills Cultural Centre: culturalcentre@mindenhills.ca or call 705-286-3763.

NOTICE OF 2026 BUDGET MEETINGS

Take Notice that there will be a Special meeting of Council and Public Meeting held on December 15, 2025 at 9:00 AM. The purpose of the meetings is to review and discuss the 2026 Mayoral Budget. **Members of the public may access the agenda and Budget materials on December 10, 2025. Members of the public are invited to participate in person or electronically** and make comment/speak at the Public Meeting relating to the 2026 budget. Members of the public wishing to participate electronically must pre-register by emailing admin@mindenhills.ca by Friday, December 12th, before 4:00 pm. Please visit our website for further details.

SAFE WINTER DRIVING

When a winter storm is expected, all municipalities have a plan. Drivers need to have their own plan. It is important to delay unnecessary travel during significant storms to give plows time to do their jobs. It's also safer for drivers.

7 Milne Street, PO Box 359, Minden, ON K0M 2K0 705-286-1260 Toll Free: 1-844-277-1260 Fax 705-286-4917 Township.Minden.Hills Minden Hills@twpmindenhills @Township_MindenHills

Getting crafty

Wilberforce held their annual craft sale at the Lloyd Watson Community Centre this past weekend in the heart of the community. Dozens of artists and artisans had tables filled with handmade products, ready to be purchased for the festive season ahead. /TIM YANO staff photographer

CENTRAL
FOOD
NETWORK
CENTRALFOODNETWORK.ORG
On a mission to eliminate food, heat & hydro insecurity in our community.
We envision a Haliburton Highlands where everyone has enough to eat & sufficient home energ to live comfortably.
GIVE THE GIFT OF WARMTH & NOURISHMENT THIS HOLIDAY SEASON!

A reminder about no smoking rules from Lakelands Public Health

As winter approaches and local arenas are once again full of athletes, parents and fans alike, Lakelands Public Health is reminding residents and visitors that the Smoke-Free Ontario Act, 2017 (SFOA) prohibits smoking or vaping on or within 20 metres of all arena property, not just doors. Throughout the year, Tobacco Enforcement Officers (TEOs) from Lakelands Public Health enforce the SFOA throughout the region - with the change of the season, TEOs will be providing additional enforcement at arenas.

"Although the Smoke Free Ontario Act has been protecting people in public spaces for nearly 20 years, residents often benefit from a reminder," said Richard Ovcharovich, Environmental Health Manager. "At Lakelands Public Health, our TEOs take a progressive enforcement approach to the SFOA. This means that Tobacco Enforcement

Officers will provide warnings and then issue charges if the behaviour is not corrected." Under the Smoke Free Ontario Act, the fine for smoking or vaping on arena property is $305.

"I spend time at arenas with my own kids and know that smoke and vape-free spaces are safer for everyone," said Dr. Thomas Piggott, Medical Officer of Health and CEO. "While many Ontarians do not smoke or vape, second-hand smoke or vapour can put everyone at risk. Second-hand vapour contains several heavy metals and ultrafine particles that are dangerous to inhale, and there is no safe level of exposure to second-hand smoke. People entering arenas should not be exposed," he added.

Smoke and vape-free spaces also create positive social norms which prevent youth from starting to smoke or vape in the first place. Among those who do smoke, nearly half report wanting to quit; smoke-free spaces have also been shown to help people with their quit attempts.

How to Report Smoking on Recreational Property

To report smoking on recreational property please speak to a Tobacco Control Officer by calling 1-844-575-4567. We accept and investigate anonymous complaints.

For More Information

- Read the Smoke-Free Ontario Act, 2017, S.O. 2017 (Ministry of Ontario)
- Visit LakelandsPH.ca/Tobacco (Lakelands Public Health)

Submitted

SIRCH community services

Creating connection and resilience - together

Be the Light – give a Gift From the Heart

Hunger is closer than most people think. In Haliburton County, one in five residents are living with food insecurity. That means parents skipping meals so their children can eat, seniors choosing between groceries and heat, and neighbours quietly carrying the weight of hunger every day.

At SIRCH, we believe no one in our community should face that alone.

Because of our donors:

- 22,000 free, nutritious meals were prepared and shared last year
- 1,750+ meals are being distributed every month this fall
- Meals reach people who are ill, isolated, unhoused, single-parenting, or living with anxiety or depression
- 14 community partners help ensure meals get to the people who need them most
- And your support creates ripples far beyond food:
- 66 preschool children were prepared for kindergarten
- 235 peer-support sessions helped vulnerable women and children feel safe, connected, and supported
- 109,000 cubic feet of reusable items were diverted from our landfills through SIRCH's Thrift Warehouse, strengthening environmental and community well-being

Community Kitchen supported by Gifts From the Heart is entirely community-powered - it receives no government funding.

Every single donation helps purchase ingredients, prepare meals, and deliver hope across Haliburton County and North Hastings.

Here's how you can Be the Light:

- Donate online at sirch.on.ca/donate
- Drop off your Gift From the Heart donation at to our SIRCH office at 49 Maple Ave, Unit 6, Haliburton
- Share this message with friends, family, and neighbours - together we can ensure no one goes hungry

Please give a Gift From the Heart today and help us continue filling plates, supporting families, and strengthening our community from the heart outward.

For more information, call 705-457-1742 or visit www.sirch.on.ca.

Submitted

Matching donations until Christmas with HHHS

The Haliburton Highlands Health Services Foundation (HHHS Foundation) is thrilled to announce a $100,000 Giving Tuesday match from Scott Pollard and Suzannah Patmios. Every donation made from Giving Tuesday, Dec. 2 through Dec. 23 will be matched dollar-for-dollar, doubling your support for essential healthcare in our community.

Scott Pollard and Suzannah Patmios, understand the importance of supporting Haliburton County, say, "We believe it is the right thing to do and we are proud to support the health of this community."

Giving Tuesday is a global day of generosity that encourages people everywhere to support causes they care about. It reminds us that when communities come together, we can achieve remarkable things - and in the Haliburton Highlands, that means stronger local healthcare for everyone.

This is a limited-time opportunity to make your gift go twice as far. Your support ensures that local residents continue to have access to quality healthcare close to home - but the match won't last forever.

Act now: visit hhhs.ca/foundation

Call to learn more and to donate over the phone: 705-457-1580

There are many ways to give this holiday season, and now, this match offers one more meaningful way to make a lasting impact.

About Haliburton Highlands Health Services Foundation

The HHHS Foundation raises funds to support the equipment and facility needs of Haliburton Highlands Health Services, ensuring high-quality healthcare for residents and visitors across Haliburton County.

Submitted

Suzannah Patmios and Scott Pollard will be matching donations for HHHS leading up to Christmas. /submitted

www.haliburtonchamber.com 705-457-4700 admin@haliburtonchamber.com

Lovin' it Local Haliburton County

During This Holiday Season, Shop and Support Local Haliburton County Businesses!

Local businesses can help you find the perfect gift, either it's from a unique merchandise or a local service or experience.

To find a local business or learn more about becoming a member of the Haliburton Highlands Chamber of Commerce, visit us at:
haliburtonchamber.com

Haliburton Highlands CHAMBER of COMMERCE

Haliburton Highlands CHAMBER of COMMERCE

Haliburton County Home Builders Association

For a list of members go to **www.hchba.ca** or call **705-457-6901**

Minden & Haliburton Home hardware building centre

16 Bobcaygeon Rd
Minden, ON
705-286-1351

5201 County Road 21
Haliburton, ON
705-457-1402

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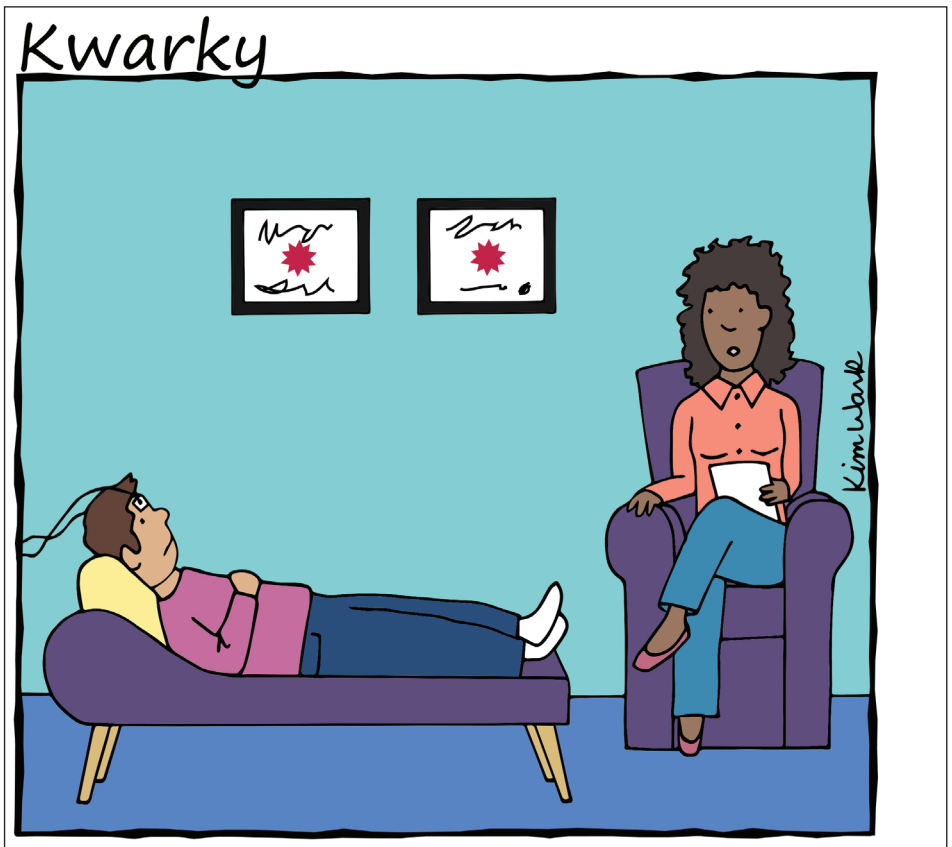
Algonquin Highlands

705-489-2711
thomascontracting.ca

To advertise on the monthly Haliburton Chamber of Commerce page please contact Laura Smith Advertising Sales Representative 705-854-0294



"Are you ready for shock therapy? You were adopted. Your wife lost her job and hasn't told you. The mole you thought was nothing is cancer."

Brought to you by

SUDOKU

		1		7	2			
	7		6		1		5	
					9	4		
	8	2						
1				9		3		
			5					
9						6		7
	5	3						
6			3	8				

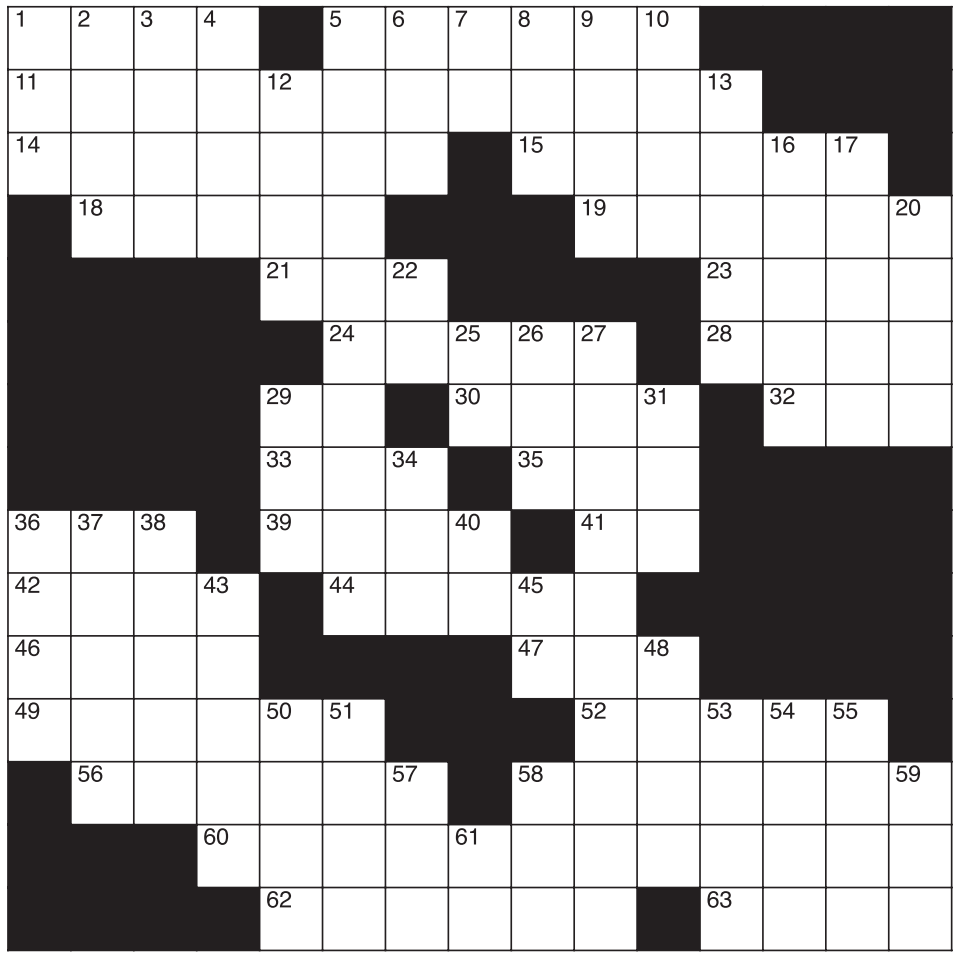
Level: Intermediate

Fun By The Numbers

Like puzzles? Then you'll love sudoku. This mind-bending puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your sudoku savvy to the test!

Here's How It Works:
Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

Answers on page 18



CLUES ACROSS
1. Dough made from corn flour
5. Rise
11. Gratitude
14. A low wall
15. Kidnap
18. A cup golfers want to win
19. Outgoing
21. ÒPartnerÓ to flow
23. Former Michigan coach Brady
24. Proverb
28. Gasteyer and de Armas are two
29. Helps a body recover
30. Baseball Cy Young winner
32. Very fast airplane
33. Offensive baseball stat
35. Body of water
36. Record of oneÕs heartbeat
39. Signs a contract
41. Atomic #24
42. Bind securely
44. French Jesuit theologian
46. Fragrant brown balsam
47. Post office box
49. Sells tickets at inflated prices
52. Places to hang coats
56. Jewish salutation
58. Yellow fruits
60. Poorly educated
62. Microorganism
63. Talk show host Barrymore

CLUES DOWN
1. A way to plan
2. Three-banded armadillo
3. Mobile
4. Romanian city
5. Making sour
6. Take a seat
7. ÒThe Golden StateÓ
8. When you hope to arrive
9. Pointed ends of pens
10. Extinct flightless bird
12. Sharp-pointed dueling sword
13. Nape of neck
16. Problems (Spanish slang)
17. Narrow carpet
20. To avoid the risk of
22. Spiritual academic degree (abbr.)
25. Equally
26. Traditional cars still need it
27. Eligible voters
29. Greek alphabet letter
31. Body part
34. Referee-declared outcome
36. Means to moving money
37. Popular footwear brand
38. Cockatoo
40. NFLÕs big game
43. Botswana currencies
45. News-reporting organization
48. Batman villain
50. Urgent request
51. Not all
53. HallmarkÕs specialty
54. Knot in a tree
55. Satisfy
57. Notable space station
58. BabyÕs dining accessory
59. Stitch clothing
61. __ and behold

Answers on page 18

Attention theatre enthusiasts: Audition call For Calendar Girls

Highlands Little Theatre Has issued a call for volunteer actors for the comedy with a message, *CALENDAR GIRLS,* directed by Jack Brezina, Producer Kate Butler and Stage manager Amy Brohm. The stage play is based on a film of the same name, which was based on events that occurred in rural England.

The production is scheduled for late March with rehearsals beginning early January on weekday evenings and/or weekends. (The schedule will be determined in consultation with those involved.) Performance dates are: March 18-20 (evenings) with a matinee on Saturday, March 21.

The cast includes 10 women (including one who can play a piano) of varying ages, early 20s and up and four men of similar age range.

If you can attend the audition at the Haliburton Highlands Museum, Haliburton Village, on Wednesday, December 3 at 7 p.m, which will involve readings of scenes from the script, please contact Stage Manager Amy Brohm at amybrohm@gmail.com to register. Please bring a brief resume that you can leave with us, and past theatre experience. We will be providing a form for you complete indicating age, contact information rehearsal days/times options. No experience? That's okay too. We welcome newbies!

The play also requires a number of back-stage personnel. If you are interested in helping in this regard, please submit a brief resume, indicating back-stage theatre experience.

If you have questions about the production, contact the director Jack Brezina, kevker@sympatico.ca

Highlands Little Theatre welcomes volunteer participants with varied theatre experience from" first timers" on up, who have a willingness to work diligently to achieve an outstanding production for our patrons in March.

(Those familiar with the story in this play, will be aware that a number of women volunteer to pose discreetly nude for a fund-raising calendar for their rural Women's Institute. The play incorporates this aspect of the story line, with emphasis on discretion. The women cast in these roles will be expected to agree to participate in these scenes. A more complete explanation will be presented at the audition.)

The Commitment

The expectation is that performers will be in attendance and on time for all rehearsals and performances. Rehearsals will be scheduled to make maximum use of your time, however, there will inevitably be some down-time during rehearsals. We anticipate there will be at least 100 hours of rehearsal prior to opening night. The rehearsal schedule will be set once the cast is determined.

The Little Theatre Tradition

Highlands Little Theatre has been presenting productions in Haliburton for over 40 years. In the Little Theatre tradition, this is a completely volunteer effort, relying on the goodwill and co-operation of all participants. We will be asking for your assistance in other areas of the production, such as with costumes, props, painting, set construction, move-in and out, etc. We realize that not everyone has the skills to do all projects, but there are numerous opportunities that only require a willing pair of hands. Please make yourself available when you can to ensure all aspects of the production are a success. If you are not already a member, you must join Highlands Little Theatre. The cost is $15/year. The membership helps support the ongoing operation of the organization.

Submitted

HHOA recognizes outstanding contributions

The Haliburton Highlands Outdoors Association (HHOA) proudly celebrated the dedication and achievements of its volunteers and supporters at its Annual General Meeting held on Sunday, Nov. 23. The event highlighted the accomplishments of the association over the past year and recognized individuals whose contributions have had a meaningful impact on local conservation and community engagement.

The afternoon's highest honour, the Jim Cardinell Award, was presented to Roger Prescott. This prestigious award recognizes outstanding long-term dedication to the HHOA's mission and the advancement of community programs. Roger's leadership, support, and hands-on contributions have had a lasting and positive impact on fisheries enhancement and conservation efforts throughout the region.

Another major highlight of the afternoon was the presentation of the Junior Volunteer of the Year Award to Ty Neville, whose enthusiasm, initiative, and dedication at the HHOA Fish Hatchery and community programs reflect the spirit of stewardship the association strives to foster in the next generation.

"The HHOA thrives because of volunteers like Roger and Ty," said association President Dan Smith during the presentations. "Their contributions demonstrate a remarkable commitment to conservation, community, and the continued success of our programs."

Additional awards recognized individuals and partners whose time, support, and involvement continue to advance the HHOA's goals, including fisheries enhancement, youth education, and habitat stewardship. The AGM also provided members with updates on hatchery output, project development, and ongoing fundraising initiatives.

About the HHOA

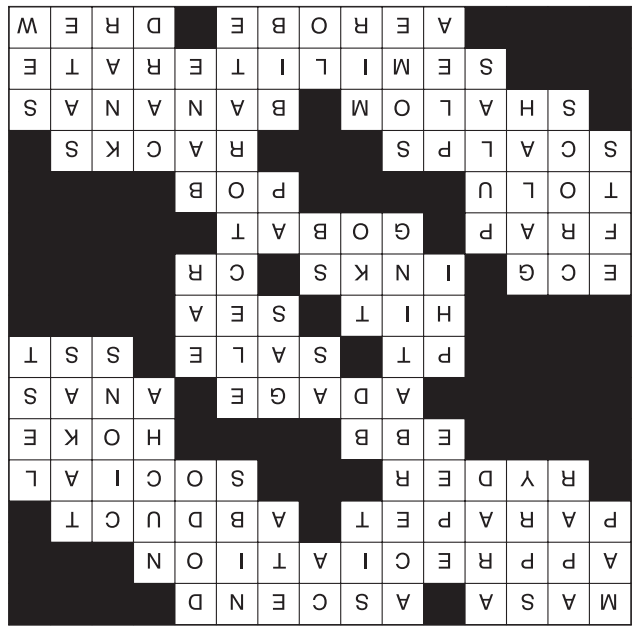
The Haliburton Highlands Outdoors Association is a non-profit organization committed to enhancing and protecting local fish populations, supporting outdoor recreation, and offering educational programs for youth and the broader community. Through volunteer leadership and community partnerships, the HHOA works to sustain the natural resources that make the Highlands unique.

Submitted

Red Hawks soar

The Red Hawks took on IE Weldon last week during their first game of the season on local ice. Despite a loss, the game was tied heading into the third against the closely-matched teams. The next home game is Tuesday, Dec. 4 at 2 p.m. in Haliburton. All are welcome to cheer the local team on, with a donation to the food bank at the door.
/ADAM FRISK staff

CROSSWORD ANSWERS



SUDOKU SOLUTION

5	9	1	4	7	2	8	6	3
8	7	4	6	3	1	2	5	9
3	2	6	8	5	9	4	7	1
7	8	2	1	4	3	5	9	6
1	6	5	7	9	8	3	4	2
4	3	9	5	2	6	7	1	8
9	4	8	2	1	5	6	3	7
2	5	3	9	6	7	1	8	4
6	1	7	3	8	4	9	2	5

Huskies Hockey

The Haliburton County Huskies slammed the Cobourg Cougars on home ice when the Cougars visited on Nov. 29. With a final score of 9-2 for Haliburton, the Huskies were ready to take on the Newmarket Hurricanes the next day, but due to extreme weather, the Sunday game has been postponed until a future date. The next home game is Saturday, Dec. 6 in Minden. /TIM YANO staff photographer

Classifieds

Call 705-457-1037
classifieds@haliburtonpress.com
Deadline Friday at 12 pm

FOR SALE

One pair of Olang Winter Boots. Wine colored. Womens size 10 or Euro 42. Built-in ice cleats. $150, Regular Price $235. Nine inch Black Boots. Women's size 10. Side zipper with front laces. $75. Prices Firm. Cash only. Serious buyers only. Call 705-454-1221

THE WAIT IS OVER…Our award winning honey butter is back. Call Tom at Glass Eagle Studios or stop by to get yours. (Clover and Golden Honey, Creamed and Wax also available) 705-286-3628. 2801 Blairhampton Rd. in Minden.

BUSINESS FOR SALE

FOR SALE: Into the Blue Woodfired Pizza Business. Seasonal truck and catering business. Comes fully equipped and ready to go for the 2026 season. Contact info@abbeygardens.ca for more details and information

WANTED

Wanted: scrap cars and trucks. Cash paid. Please call **705-286-3758** or cell **249-332-1212**

FOR RENT

Newly renovated 2-unit house on 9.5 scenic acres near Haliburton. LOWER: 1-bed, 1-bath. Features open-concept living, new appliances, in-unit laundry and outdoor living spaces. 10 minutes from Haliburton & perfect for peaceful living. Contact: info@aboveboardcarpentry.com **705-455-2196**

BOARD MEMBERS

Haliburton County Council is seeking members of the public for Haliburton County Library Board

The County of Haliburton benefits from the involvement of local residents who help County Council make decisions about the Library programs and services provided to our citizens. Applicants for this position must be:

- At least 18 years old
- A Canadian Citizen
- A resident of Haliburton County

As a Board Member you will be an advocate of the library's impact on the community and be prepared to take an active and responsible role in the governance and policymaking of the Board.

You can find the detailed posting along with application instructions on our website at www.haliburtoncounty.ca/careers

If you require assistance with the application process please contact Andrea Brown, Library CEO/Chief Librarian at info@haliburtonlibrary.ca.

The application process will close on December 19, 2025, at noon.

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EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

The Corporation of the County of Haliburton
Requires a
Temporary Full-time Truck Driver/Equipment Operator

Truck Driver/Equipment Operators are responsible for the safe operation of heavy equipment such as a trucks, backhoes,loaders, and wing plows. This is a temporary contract. Successful applicants will possess an DZ/AZ licence and have experience operating heavy equipment. This position requires good judgment and communication skills and an ability to work on-call hours and respond to short notice call ins. The hourly rate for this unionized CUPE position is $29.17.

Visit our website at www.haliburtoncounty.ca/careers for a more detailed posting and job description.
Please forward your resume to shume@haliburtoncounty.ca no later than December 4, 2025, at 4:30pm.

We thank all who apply for this position; however only those selected for an interview will be contacted.

The County of Haliburton is an equal opportunity employer.
Accommodation can be provided in all steps of the hiring process, please contact Human Resources for further details.

In accordance with the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, the information gathered will be used solely for the purpose of job selection.

The Municipality of Highlands East
Is Currently Seeking A
Part-Time, Labourer
Property/Parks & Recreation Department

Current Rate of Pay per CUPE Local 4416 Collective Agreement:
Rate of Pay- $25.94
Up to 30 hours per week, varied days of the week
Afternoon and weekend work required

A copy of the detailed job posting, and description are available upon request or on the Highlands East website at www.highlandseast.ca

If you are interested in joining our dedicated team of municipal professionals, applications clearly marked "Application – Part-Time, Property/Parks & Recreation Labourer" may be submitted on or before 12:00 p.m, Thursday, December 11th, 2025, via mail, in person, fax or email. Interested applicants may submit their resume, including references, in confidence to:

Brittany McCaw, CAO/Treasurer
Municipality of Highlands East
P.O. Box 295, 2249 Loop Road
Wilberforce, ON K0L 3C0
E-Mail: bmccaw@highlandseast.ca

We thank all applicants for their interest but only those selected for an interview will be contacted.

The Municipality of Highlands East is an equal opportunity employer. Applicants requiring accommodation are asked to contact the CAO/Treasurer.

In accordance with the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, the information gathered will be used solely for candidate selection purposes only. Questions about this collection should be directed to Brittany McCaw, CAO/Treasurer.

JOB POSTING
Haliburton County Youth Wellness Hub
Medical Administration
Part-time/ One year contract

We are currently offering a part-time (21 hour/week) 1-year contract. Under the direction of the Youth Wellness Hub Manager, the Medical Administrative Support person is responsible for providing administrative support to the Nurse Practitioner. Will help The Youth Wellness Hub in providing an inclusive, positive and welcoming space where participants have access to services and support delivered in an integrated fashion.
The ideal candidate will have 1-3 years' experience working in a mental health setting or 1-3 years' experience working in an administrative role in mental health or medical setting. They should have experience working with an electronic medical records system and have exceptional confidentiality awareness skills and understanding of PHIPA.
Police and vulnerable sector check required as well as valid first aid and CPR and ability drive.

Point in Time is committed to building an organization that reflects the communities we work with. We encourage applications from members of Black, Indigenous, and racialized communities, LGBTQ+ communities, people with disabilities, and members of other equity seeking groups. Point in Time will provide accommodation during the recruitment process to ensure equal access to applicants with disabilities, upon the request of the applicant.

Visit www.pointintime.ca for a detailed job description.

HOURS PER WEEK: 21 hours/week
RATE OF PAY: $29.00/hour

Please send cover letter and resume to HR@pointintime.ca or fax 705-457-3492 by December 12, 2025.

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Stained Glass Workshops. From beginner up. Registration open now. Learn the art of stained glass. Call Tom for details. 705-286-3628

Children's Christmas Gift Sale
St. Paul's Anglican Church
19 Invergordon Ave., Minden

Friday, December 5, 4pm to 7pm
Saturday, December 6, 10am - 2pm

Nothing cost more than $1

Children Bring your List to Shop for ...
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Enjoy some "ME" time while our volunteers help your child shop. We wrap and tag gifts ready to take home and put under the tree.
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Our friends at Dysart et al
Andrea Mueller, Rob Camelon, Dave Coulter, Hailey Cole, Abby Roberts, Fire Dept. Volunteers, O.P.P. and EMS
Starters: Bill Frost, Bob Amos, Ken Savoy, Bob Hill, Bill Hodges
Traffic and Parking Controllers:Matt Oulette, Irv Handler, Brian Monaghan. Bob Park, Tim Nicholls, our friends at Haliburton United Church, Sunbelt Rentals, Ben, Kevin, Scott
Our Friends at Haliburton United Church
Sunbelt Rentals. Many Thanks to all those who entered with their lights, music and WONDERFULLY DECORATED FLOATS & ENTHUSIASTIC DANCERS AND WALKERS AND OUR EQUINE FRIENDS. Those of the Santa Float:Bill Frost with Emmerson Helpers Bob Amos, Ken Savoy, Bob Hill, Bill Hodges, Lions David and Betty Mills, James Lawr, Ray Howlett, Marilyn Frost, Paul Sheardown, Renee Griffith
Remembering Ken Noble, Jim Meadows, Ernie Winterburn and Sam Charlton
Thanks to Andy Salvatori and Family for donating the tree and to Dysart Fire volunteers and Emmerson Lumber for felling and erecting the tree
Anthony and Juliane VanLieshout for the location and hydro for the tree. Gord Kidd and Kathryn Frost for the Carol Sing CanoeFM & MooseFM, Echo & Highlander for all your help! Thanks to our Post Office friends for collecting the kids' letters to Santa Thanks to those donors for helping with the parade cost. And anyone I may have missed!
SEE YOU NEXT YEAR!

From Jim Frost Parade Coordinator, Downtown Haliburton BIA, and Haliburton and District Lions Club

OBITUARIES

In Loving Memory of

Barbara Cameron

It is with deep sadness we said good-bye to Barbara Cameron who passed away peacefully at Highland Wood LTC on Saturday, October 18, 2025.

Barbara was first introduced to Haliburton in 1969 when she and her husband purchased a cottage on Kennesis Lake where, with their three young daughters, they spent the next sixteen summers and every weekend possible.

In 1993, Barbara made Haliburton her permanent home and became an active and contributing member of our community for 30 years. Barbara had many friends from her full-time work at the T.D. Bank in Minden; her volunteer work at the Stanhope Museum and Canoe Radio; and her long-time membership in a book club. Barbara also enjoyed yoga, line dancing, the summer theatre, choral singing, bowling and many community dances and other events. Barbara missed no opportunity to dance and she loved to sing along to everything from "oldies" music to opera. She also loved and appreciated nature and the outdoors. Barbara's love for all animals included her beloved cats and dogs who were her cherished pets throughout the years.

Barbara was a beautiful, vivacious, brave and wise lady. She was a most loving and steadfastly supportive Mom and Nana to her three girls, six grandchildren and also a great-grandmother to two. They will love her and miss her always.

Barbara leaves behind a treasure of fond memories for her children, family and close friends. She will be missed by all who were blessed to share in her life.

Thank you to all the staff at Highland Wood for the fine care Barbara received throughout her stay there.

In Loving Memory of

Ethel Robinson (nee Hall)

With profound sadness, we say goodbye to Ethel Robinson of Bowmanville, Ontario whose loving spirit and kind heart touched the lives of everyone she knew. Ethel left this world on November 29, 2025 after a brief stay at the Marigold Hospice, leaving a void in the lives of so many people.

She was predeceased by her husband, Keith Robinson and her son Thomas Robinson and numerous siblings. She is survived by her brothers Wilfred Hall (Ann Hall), Ross Hall and Bill Hall: Her children Michael Robinson (Chris), Donald Robinson (Delisa Taylor-Robinson), Amie Robinson and by her daughter-in-law Linda Robinson. Her grandchildren were the joy of her life, Craig Robichaud, Brittany Arthur, Cody Arthur, Paige Robinson, Jessica Baird (James Baird), Jordy Robinson, Brendon Robinson (Courtney Elliot) and Aren Robinson and her great grand-children Xavier Arthur, Emilie Arthur, Annie Arthur, Keith Arthur, Liam Baird, Oliver Houghton, Noah Baird and Saira Arthur.

We would also like to extend our sincere appreciation to Dr. Figueiredo and the Marigold Hospice for their exceptional care.

A private family gathering honoring Ethel will be held at a later date. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the Marigold Hospice. (Marigold Hospice - Clarington Hospice Residence) would be appreciated by the family and can be arranged through the Gordon A. Monk Funeral Home Ltd., P.O. Box 427, Minden, Ontario K0M 2K0.

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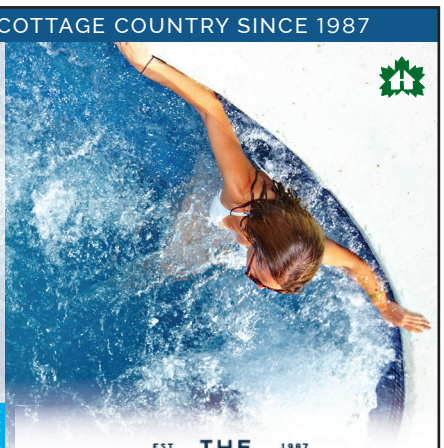

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THE HALIBURTON COUNTY
ECHO
The Voice Of The Highlands Since 1882

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 5, 1995 Vol. 113, No. 42 • 40 PAGES 75 cents (incl. GST)

Hospital layoffs deeper than staff expected

by PETER DOWNS
Staff Reporter

Minden Hospital staff are "shocked" by staff cuts they say are far more severe than they had been led to anticipate by management.

In all, 10 full-time and two part-time positions were eliminated as of Friday when parent hospital St. Joseph's cut back the operating hours at Minden's emergency room by four hours to 12 hours a day.

Five of the full-time employees were given early retirement packages, while the other six full-timers and the two part-time workers were laid off indefinitely.

Though the employees were issued lay-off notices in June, the decision on which jobs would actually be lost "was up in the air" right up until Thursday afternoon — the day before the layoffs were to take effect, said Registered Nurse Gwen Hewitt, president of CUPE Local 2787, which represents the workers.

"There's a lot of hostility and anger and shock, I guess you could say, (among the employees), because there have been a lot of positions disappear that we didn't know of at all," she said.

As well as the Registered Practical Nurses, one RN and dietary and maintenance staff let go, both of the hospital's part-time clerical workers were laid off, raising the question of who will be expected to answer the phones and do all the paperwork.

"I suspect it will be the nurses," answers Hewitt. "The big question is who will do all the clerical work because I can tell you it won't be the nurses."

Laying off the clerical staff is one of the cost-saving measures management had never alluded to during prior negotiations, she maintained.

Facing a deficit of at least $100,000 this fiscal year, Foster Loucks, executive director of the Haliburton and Minden Hospitals, said management has been forced to spend its resources where it counts the most — patient care.

"Where Gwen (Hewitt) has concerns and, frankly, where I have some concerns too, is that we decided not to have any clerical workers," he said. "I've got concerns about whether the

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Cuts needed to get out of the hole: Hodgson

by PETER DOWNS
Staff Reporter

The only way Ontario can dig itself out of a financial hole where it spends $1-million an hour more than it takes in is to chop government spending by pushing schools, municipalities and hospitals to re-examine the way they do business, says Haliburton-Victoria MPP Chris Hodgson.

Last week, Finance Minister Ernie Eves delivered the shove they've all been bracing themselves for, announcing $6-billion in funding cuts over the next three years.

"Every organization in society — the private sector has already had to do this — is being forced to re-think how they operate to become more cost-effective ... They have to restructure the way they offer services," Hodgson said Saturday, three days after Eves' economic statement in the Legislature.

Eves acknowledged the "human cost" the spending cuts will exact across the province over the coming years as the Tories try to balance their budget.

But the price would be higher, if the province's present deficit situation was left as is, he said.

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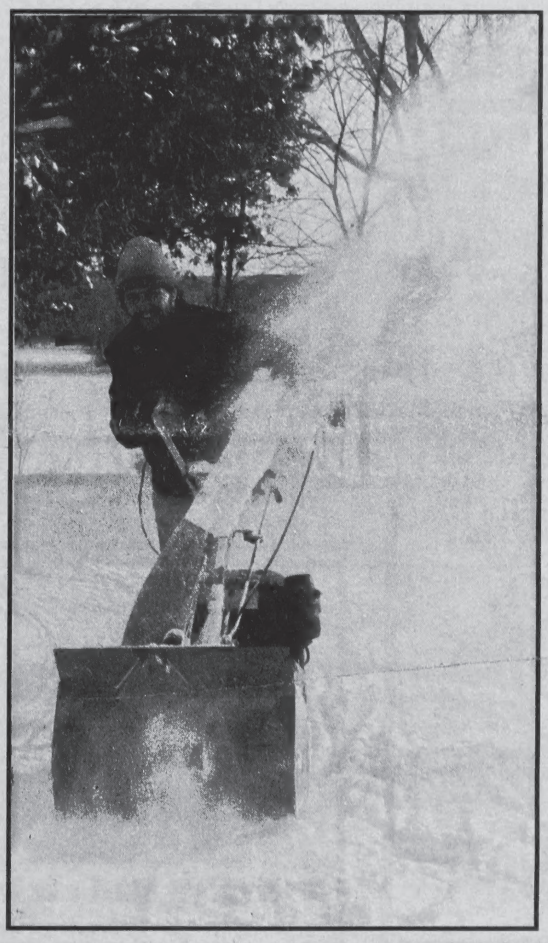
WINTER JUMPS THE GUN



by PETER DOWNS
Staff Reporter

Winter may not officially begin for close to three weeks, but don't try to pass that off on any of the Highlanders who spent last Tuesday morning digging out from under 35 centimetres of snow.

Add to that 18 other days in November when there were measurable amounts of snow — more than two tenths of a centimetre — and people can be forgiven for believing winter has arrived a bit too early.

"It's certainly been the hardest winter this fall," says Haliburton's resident weather watcher, Jim Elstone. "It's the old story: The first day of winter and the first winter's day don't always equate to be the same thing."

For those who go by the calendar, the first day of winter won't actually arrive until December 22.

But for those who go by what's piled up in their driveways, overflowing from their satellite dishes and covering their cars almost every morning, winter's here.

The 35-cm dump of snow that fell on the Highlands over 25 hours last Monday and Tuesday wasn't a

See ALTHOUGH page 2

DIGGING THEIR WAY OUT: Last Tuesday's big snow storm gave people lots to do. Top, Eric Smith uses his snowblower to be able to leave his Hwy. 121 home. Just a few kilometres east, Dysart road crews clear off the abundance of snow.

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Don and Anne have deep roots in the Highlands – Don's great-grandmother built the Bonnie View, now a local landmark. But Don's cancer treatments became more intensive, the couple faced a challenge. The radiation was exhausting, and the long drives to appointments was becoming impossible.

Don had always been the driver, but with his health declining and Anne nervous to get behind the wheel again, they didn't know how they would manage.

That changed when they learned about **HHHS Community Support Services' medically necessary transportation program** during a seminar at their apartment complex.

"Once we spoke with the intake team, we learned we qualified for the subsidy," Anne says. "We had our first ride booked before the end of the meeting."

In September alone, Don took **seven trips to Peterborough** and one to **Oshawa** for treatment – each trip costing **$25** thanks to donor-supported subsidies.

"It's been really good," Don says. "It's taken the pressure off both of us, and now we're dropped right at the door, so I don't have to walk as far with my walker. We have marvelous volunteers, and this program means so much to people like us who want to stay independent."

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